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Sketch of the Independent Christian Church and the Sargent Murray Gilman House

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Sketch of the Independent Christian Church and the Sargent Murray Gilman House

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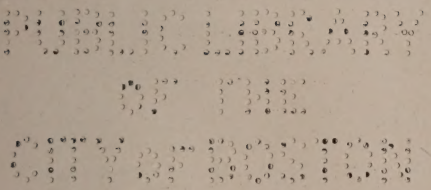
By LEVI M. POWERS



MURRAY PRESS
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Louis M. Lewis
Sept. 7. 1920

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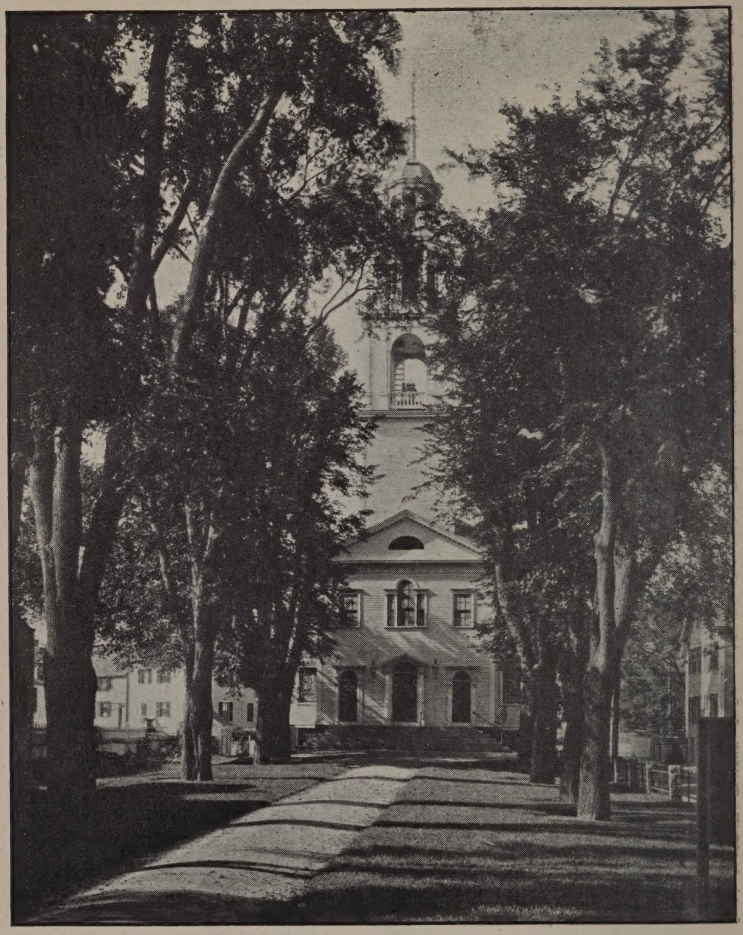
CITY OF BOSTON

HE history of the Independent Christian Church and that of the Sargent-Murray-Gilman House in Gloucester are inseparably bound together, and in these two buildings the city has memorials of the past unrivaled in historic interest and unsurpassed in architectural excellence.

The establishment of the Church was an important chapter in the struggle for religious liberty in America.

John Murray preached his first sermon in what is now the United States of America in 1770—just one hundred and fifty years after the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth. With his preaching began the great fight for religious liberty, a part of the general struggle for freedom, one phase of which was the fight for political liberty, known as the War of the Revolution.

John Murray was the voice of ideas already struggling into being. He first came to Gloucester because invited by a group of people who already knew what they believed. Three years before Murray was invited to the city this group had read a book by Rev. James Relly entitled "Union, or the Treatise on the Consanguinity between Christ and His Church." A number of them had become converts to Relly's ideas, and when they read that a disciple of Relly was in Boston they asked the most influential member of the group, Mr. Winthrop Sargent, according to Dr. Eddy, historian of Universalism, to go to Boston and invite Murray to Gloucester. In response to Mr. Sargent's invitation, Mr. Murray came to the city and preached nine times on nine successive days. For the first time in his three years in America he found here a group of influential people already in sympathy with his ideas. He was so well pleased with the people, and his sponsors so well pleased with Murray, that a few months later he came again, on which occasion he wrote in his journal: "Here my God grants me rest from my toils; here I have a taste of heaven. The new song is sung here and Worthy is the Lamb constantly dwells upon their tongues."



The Independent Christian Church

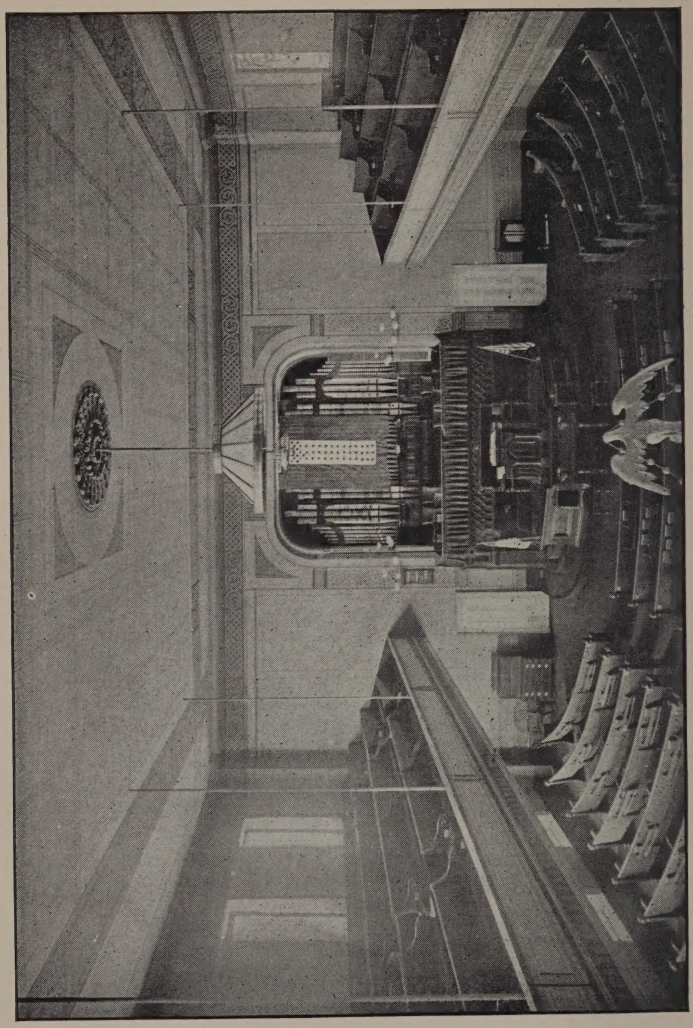
From this time on for twenty years, with the exception of eight months when he was a chaplain in the Army of the Revolution, the part of one year when persecution drove him to England, and when away on missionary journeys, Gloucester was his home. Here he found the support which made his career possible.

That these Gloucester Liberals were not wandering in the wilderness, looking for some strange doctrine, is clear from the wording of the invitation to Murray to become their teacher, which was: "We invite Mr. Murray to be our religious teacher so long as he preaches the gospel as we now understand it."

The work of establishing an independent church was not easy. At this time there was to all intents and purposes an established church in New England: The Church of the Standing Order, as it was called. All were taxed for its support and were required to attend its services. It was due in part to the fact that Murray and his followers advocated heretical ideas and in part to the fact that they refused to pay for the support of the Orthodox Church, that they soon found themselves in trouble. This is the fate of all pioneers. Murray was mobbed, ordered out of town as a vagrant, cursed, stoned, and called a Romanist in disguise. The Sargents had their goods seized and sold for the support of the church they had left; while one man, William Pearce, was put in Salem Jail for resisting the authorities.

The Universalists refused to support the established church, holding that the Bill of Rights guaranteed to each person liberty to choose his own religious teacher. In fighting for their own rights they felt they were fighting for the rights of all other men, too.

They could have incorporated and so secured legal standing for that particular group, but they said: "We should feel ourselves very unhappy if there was no other security in these matters than acts of legislation which might be replaced at any time when a particular party should prevail."



The Interior of the Church

For this public-spirited reason they refused to pay and they refused to incorporate. The matter thus came into court.

Both in the importance of the issues and the eminence of the legal lights engaged in the case, this was one of the great legal battles of America. Murray's counsel was Hon. Rufus King, who, however, removed to New York before the case came to trial, and Judge James Sullivan, nearly if not quite his equal in legal lore, took his place, while the First Parish of Gloucester was represented by Theophilus Parsons, one of the most famous lawyers of America.

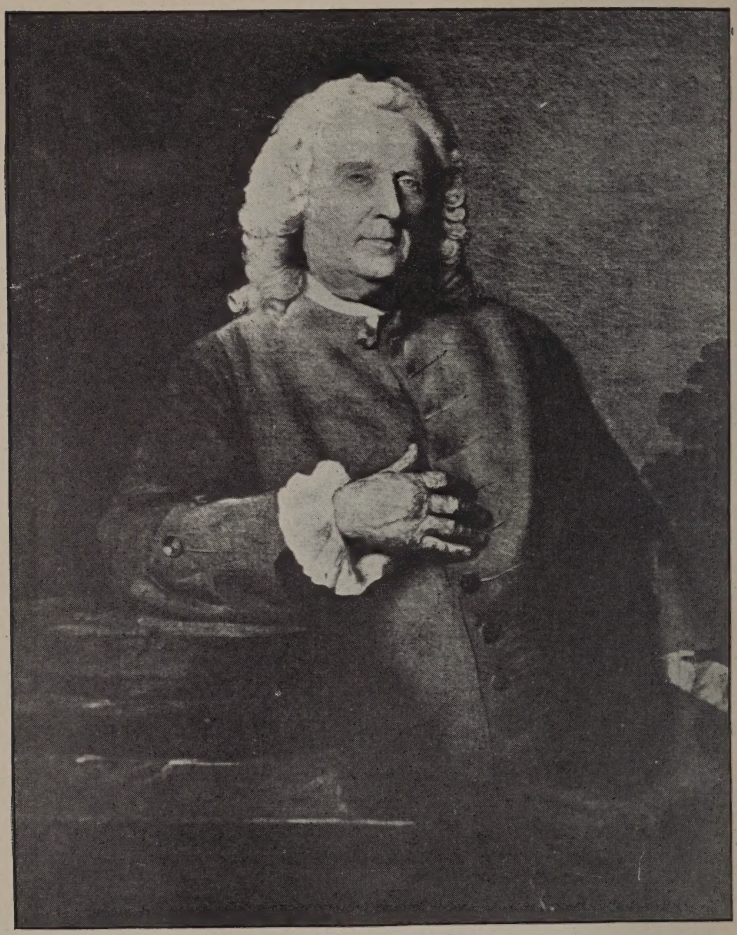
At the first trial the judges instructed the jury to find against the Universalists. This the jury refused to do. This necessitated a second trial, which took place a year later, and this time the judges reversed their earlier opinion, in part perhaps influenced by public opinion and in part perhaps convinced by a very able pamphlet entitled, "An Appeal to the Impartial Public by the Society of Christian Independents, Congregating in Gloucester."

This pamphlet has been generally attributed to Epes Sargent, but may have been Judge Sullivan's method of securing a popular recall of the judge's decision long before the recall of judges was a matter of debate. Any way, whether the work of the layman, Epes Sargent, or the lawyer, James Sullivan, it did the work intended.

The right to a free church was legalized. Before this time neither Catholics, Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Quakers, Unitarians, nor other heretics, had any right to give their support wholly to their own faith.

The fight for religious liberty, therefore, is the contribution of the Universalists of Gloucester to the history of America, and the cost of the long and expensive legal battle was, no doubt, largely defrayed by the Sargents, who were the people of largest means connected with the movement.

In 1778 the Society built a meeting-house in one corner of Winthrop Sargent's garden, near where the Bradford Block now stands on Main Street, not far from the post-office. It was 32½ by 48 feet, with thirty



(FROM A PORTRAIT BY COPLEY)

EPES SARGENT OF GLOUCESTER
ANCESTOR OF THE GLOUCESTER SARGENTS

box pews, and was the first church building erected by Universalists in the United States, or, for that matter, in the world. To the erection of that building Winthrop Sargent contributed more than one-third the cost. At the dedication of this building there was used the little barrel organ still to be seen in the church, and which had not long before been captured by Capt. John Somes—privateersman—from an English vessel. Captain Somes was prominent in the affairs of the church and the city, and later was the first president of the Gloucester Bank, now the Gloucester National Bank, established in 1796.

Murray was not ordained until Dec. 25, 1788. On this occasion three laymen were appointed by the church to conduct these ceremonies. The men appointed were Winthrop Sargent, David Plummer, and Barnet Harkin, first master of the first Masonic Lodge in Gloucester.

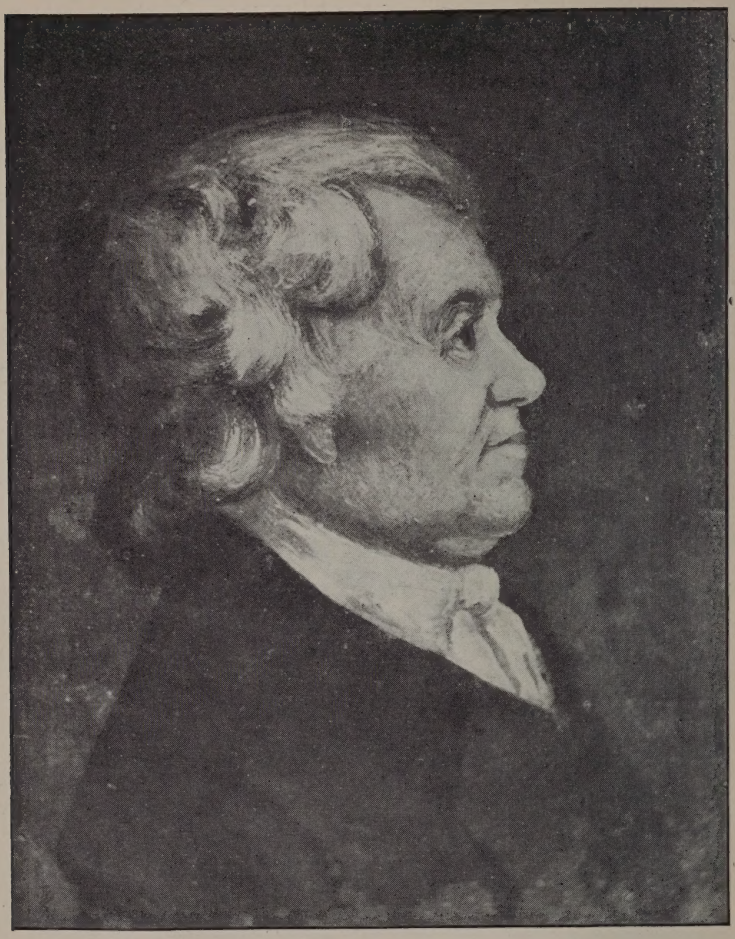
This first ordination of a Universalist minister was, therefore, conducted entirely by laymen.

When King's Chapel, in Boston, became Unitarian, James Freeman, the minister, was ordained and set apart as teacher by laymen, and there the custom has never been changed. Among the Universalists this remained the method for many years. In fact, it was not until the second minister of this church, Rev. Thomas Jones, was ordained in 1804 that we have any record of an ordination service in which all those participating were ministers.

In the church may be seen the Charter of Compact, which is really the charter of all the Free Churches of America.

All who visit Gloucester should look at this charter with the veneration which belongs to a great historic document. Besides this there was a previous document known as the Articles of Association, a kind of preliminary charter, and upon these two documents are to be found the following names:

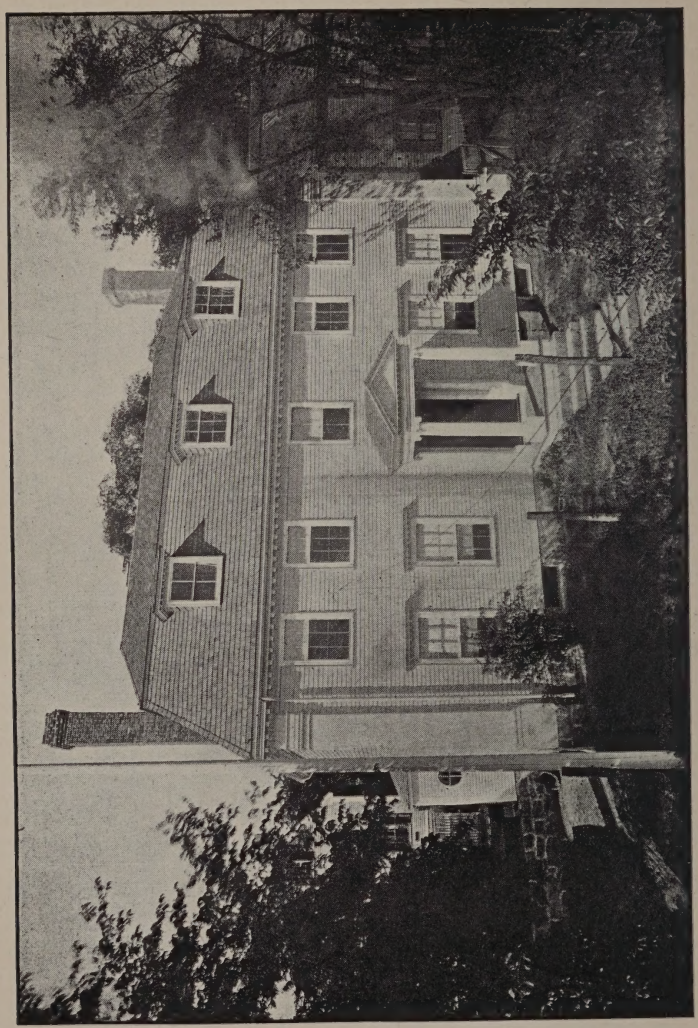
Winthrop Sargent, Catherine Sargent, Judith Sargent, Bradbury Sanders, Anna Saunders, Joseph Foster, Lydia Foster, David Pearce, David Plummer, Elizabeth Plummer, Jonathan Trask, Abigail Trask, John Somes, George Creighton, John Stevens, Jr., Judith Stevens, Phile-



JOHN MURRAY

mon Haskell, John Stevens Ellery, Esther Ellery, James Prentiss, Lydia Prentiss, William Pearce, Moses Bennett, Winthrop Allen, Samuel Saywood, Susa Saywood, Abraham Sawyer, Ann Olive, Ebenezer Hough, Mary Hough, Joseph Everden, Aaron Lufkin, Robert Weston, Thomas Sparling, Isaac Bennett, Nabby Palfrey, Jemima Cook, Jerusha Jordan, Lydia Parsons, Israel Trask, William Dolliver, Abigail Dolliver, Solomon Babson, Rebecca Babson, Benjamin Lufkin, Sarah Lufkin, Rebecca Smith, Hannah Tucker, Isaac Ball, Hannah Ball, Mary Sargent, Edward Crossman, Rebecca Parsons, Jemima Parsons, Susanna Mellings, Mary Steele, Rebekah Ingersoll, Joseph Lufkin, Caleb Pool, Joshua Gammage, Francis Norwood, Nathaniel Sargent, Jeremiah Foster, Downing Lee, William Doyle, Michael Gaffney, Abraham Row, Jonathan Brown, Abraham Brown, Stephen Norwood, David Pool, Nathan Pool, John Norwood, Caleb Norwood, Jr., Benjamin Tarr, Jr., Thomas Babbit, Samuel Morgan, Ephraim Roberts, John Gott, Ebenezer Gott, Ebenezer Pool, Jonathan Low, Francis Low, Caleb Norwood, Isaac Elwell, Job Knight, John Low, 3d, Israel Trask, Thomas Mason, James Harris, Isaac Trask, Jr., John Allen, James Blake, Thomas Foster, Nathaniel Bennett, David Sargent, Abraham Sawyer, Jr., Francis Pool, Joseph Baker, Joshua Webster, James Saunders, Gloster Dalton, William Card, James Sawyer, 3d, Coas Gardner, Aaron Lufkin, Samuel Marshall, Samuel Morehead, William Lee, Richard Pew, Joseph Moore, Joseph Foster, Jr., James Babson, Peter Dolliver, John Pool, W. Wier, Job Whipple, Jesse Saville, Gideon Challis, Humphrey Morse, James Steele, Joseph Saunders, Samuel Lane, and Benjamin Hale.

All who can trace their ancestry to those whose names appear among the founders of the Independent Christian Church, Gloucester, have reason for just pride. It is something, perhaps, to be eligible to the societies of the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution. It is more to be a descendant of those who dared ridicule, abuse and persecution for religious liberty. We shall get an idea of the spirit which animated these people if we remember these facts. Most of them were leading citizens. A few years later, according to the assessed valuation, two-thirds of the



The Sargent-Murray-Gilman House

total wealth of the city belonged to members of the Independent Christian Church. Yet as evidence of the essential democracy of these people we find that one of the signers of the Charter of Compact was a colored man, Gloster Dalton. When he died, eighteen years later, Parson Jones, after attending his funeral, wrote in his journal: "April 11th, 1813, Gloster Dalton, an African, supposed to be ninety years old. The said Gloster Dalton was an honest, industrious man and belonged to the Independent Christian Society many years. He was a native of Africa and brought away a slave, so called. For there are no slaves, all men are born free."

The Universalist Church, early in its history, went on record as opposed to slavery. Its philosophy committed it to belief in the worth of all souls before God—a belief which logically implies belief in the worth of all souls before men.

It is a curious fact, illustrating how conservatism easily captures all institutions, that after the Charter of Compact was signed by eighty-five men in 1785, the legal control of the affairs of the church remained absolutely in the hands of the male members of the congregation up to 1914, although Father Jones, who was a progressive, nearly one hundred years earlier, pleaded that women should be given a voice in the conduct of the society's affairs.

In the long years of its history there is much of interest that may not be told in a short narrative. The present church building was dedicated in 1806. At this time a $20 gold piece was placed in the corner-stone. If you will take the trouble to compound this at six per cent., you will find that had it been set at work instead of being deposited in a corner-stone, it would now amount to nearly $25,000.

The church has been somewhat changed since first built, but the general plan of the able architect, Colonel Jacob Smith, has never been disturbed, and it is generally conceded to be one of the finest examples, without and within, of a church of the period to be found in New England. It has been recently restored through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Bray of New York, and under the direction of Miss Blanche Morse of Boston, the color scheme bringing out finely beauties partially concealed

(FROM A PORTRAIT BY COPLEY)

JUDITH SARGENT MURRAY

For whom the house was built

by the work done shortly after the Civil War. Mrs. Bray's grandfather, Mr. Robert Fears, was a generous friend of the church and his residence is now the fine parsonage of the society.

The bell was cast by Paul Revere, who also made a book plate for Epes Sargent, the camp service used by Governor Winthrop Sargent during his service as an aide to Washington during the war of the Revolution, now owned by Mrs. Paul Dana, of New York, and also the communion service which Epes Sargent presented to the church of the established order before the family became Universalists.

The clock in front of the gallery is one of the finest Simon Willard clocks in existence. It was given at the time the church was built, but the name of the donor is not known.

Besides John Murray and Thomas Jones, the church has had several distinguished ministers, among them Richard Eddy, historian of Universalism, to whom our church is under a lasting debt of gratitude; A. D. Mayo, later a Unitarian minister and a writer and educator of ability; E. H. Capen, D. D., LL. D., president of Tufts College, and William H. Rider, whose pastorate of thirty years is the longest of any in the history of the church, with the exception of Father Jones.

This church should be generously endowed, a pride to all Universalists, all the people of Gloucester, and the descendants of those who helped to found it.

The Sargent-Murray-Gilman House, nearly opposite the church at 47 Middle St., has not only great historic interest, but great artistic merit as well. It is the last remaining of a number of fine houses built by the Sargents in Gloucester.

It was known for a long time by different names, as the Judith Sargent House, the Revolutionary House, and the John Murray House. It is now known as the Sargent-Murray-Gilman House, and is owned by the Sargent-Murray-Gilman House Association, a corporation for holding historic property, and so called for Judith Sargent, for whom the house was built, John Murray, her second husband, and founder of American Universalism, who lived here after his marriage, and Rev. Samuel Gilman,

Stairway, showing hand-carved banisters and newel post

author of the words of "Fair Harvard," who was born in the house in 1791.

It is a strange coincidence that this house should be associated with two famous leaders of the liberal movement in America.

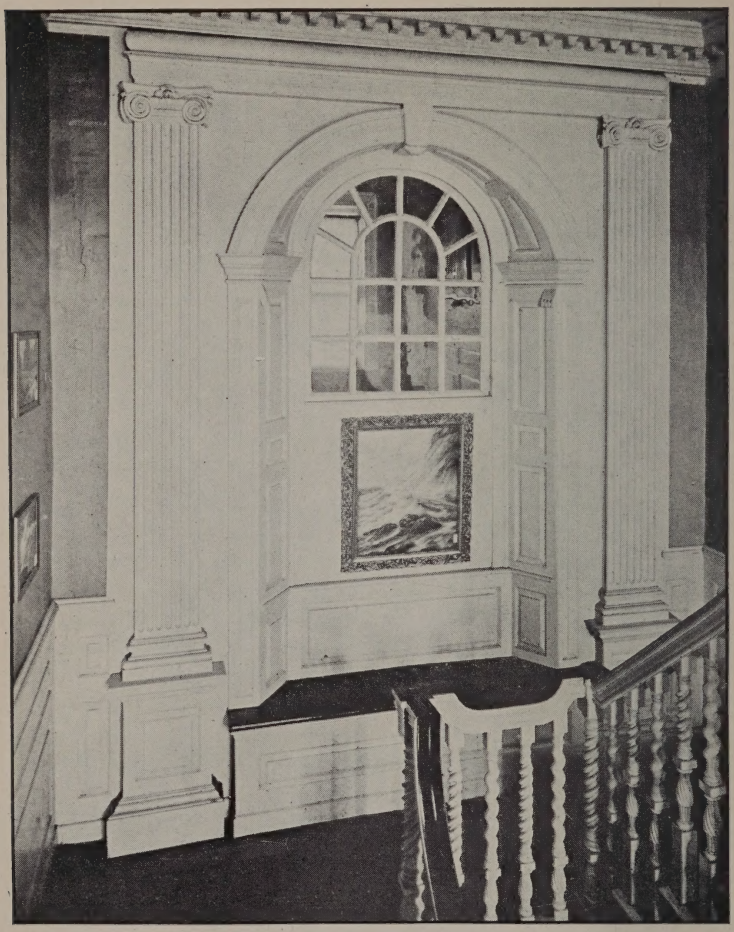
Since the house was acquired by the Association about three years ago, a considerable part of the work of restoration has been accomplished under the direction of Joseph Everett Chandler of Boston, and a beginning in the work of furnishing some historic rooms has been made. Two rooms have been assigned the Sargent family, the most distinguished family of Gloucester origin. In fact, it is not an over statement to say no other American family has produced a greater variety of first-class talent. In business, as soldiers and statesmen, in art, literature and science, members of this family have attained high and in some cases the highest distinction.

The Sargent rooms have been planned to illustrate the place of this family, so many of whose members were born in Gloucester, in the life of the nation.

The two chief features of these rooms are photographs of prominent members of the family or photographs of the historic portraits by which their features have been preserved, and a collection of the books written or edited by the Sargents of Gloucester origin. A catalogue of these photographs has been prepared, giving the subject, artist, and present ownership of the portraits of many members of the family. Special reference here can be made to only a few who have occupied a prominent place in the world's affairs. Number 1 is Colonel Epes Sargent, the first of the Gloucester family, historically distinct,—and grandfather of Judith, for whom the house was built. His portrait, painted by Copley, shows a man of Johnsonian proportions and features, referred to by Mrs. Murray as one whose word was accepted as final in all disputes by his fellow townsmen; clearly a man of great force and character.

John Osborne and Epes Sargent, Numbers 8 and 9, were both editors of influence and authors of talent, the former living in New York and

Numbers 9 and 10 are of Judith Sargent, who was fortunate enough to have her portrait painted by John Singleton Copley when a young



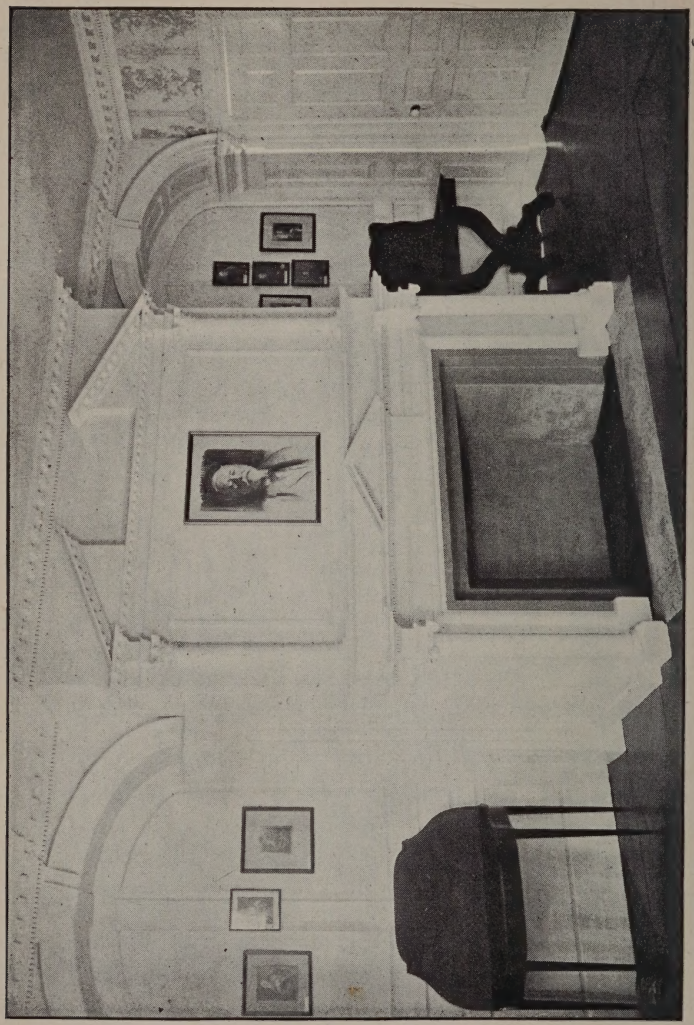
Window on the stair landing

lady, and in mature life by Gilbert Stuart, probably the only woman in America who had that distinction. She was the wife of Murray, first preacher of Universalism in America, and a writer of plays and an editor and author. Three volumes by her hand were among the one thousand books in Washington's library.

Number 14 is Governor Winthrop Sargent, an officer and an aide to Washington throughout the War of the Revolution. He was official surveyor of the New Ohio Company, afterward the Northwest Territory, and later secretary and acting governor, planting there the seeds of Universalism. He was also the first governor of the Mississippi Territory, having been appointed to that position in 1799 by President John Adams. He was Judith Sargent's elder brother. His portrait by Gilbert Stuart bears resemblance to that of Washington, whose adviser and admirer he was. Besides himself, his wife, his sister, Mrs. Murray, and her daughter, Julia Bingaman, were all painted by Stuart, and judging from the photographs these must be among the very best examples of this great artist's work. Three of these are now in the home of Mrs. Paul Dana, New York.

Another brother of Judith was named Fitzwilliam—Number 22—a great merchant at the time when Gloucester's ships sailed many seas. At one time he had eighty vessels ploughing the waves. His portrait by Corne is one of the most interesting of the many in this collection.

Numbers 26, 27 and 28 and 30 are of John Singer Sargent, whose father, Fitzwilliam, was born in Gloucester. His name needs no explanation, since it heads the list of living artists. He has presented the house two objects of priceless value—an original sketch by himself in black and white, Number 45, of Prof. Charles Sprague Sargent, and 29, a bronze medallion of himself by St. Gaudens. These are the most valuable possessions of the house. Of Prof. Charles Sprague Sargent, seen in 31-32 with his cousin, the artist John Singer Sargent, and in 45, delineated by that artist's unrivaled skill, it may truthfully be said that he has done the work of three immortals in one life time. His numerous scientific publications are a notable and valuable output. His "Sylva of North America" in fourteen volumes belongs to the monumental productions of human achievement. While as the director of the Arnold Arboretum in all its



Fireplace in the Sargent Room

notable features he has a monument of increasing beauty and value as long as trees shall grow.

In Number 63 we see Henry Sargent, a portrait painter of ability. He studied under Benjamin West and Gilbert Stuart. He painted the portrait of Peter Faneuil in Faneuil Hall, Boston, and the Landing of the Pilgrims in Memorial Hall, Plymouth. He was a cousin of Mrs. Murray, and painted the large picture of her husband in the Murray Room. He was adjutant general of Massachusetts and invented a plan for an elevated railway.

Paul Dudley Sargent, whose features by John Trumbull we see in 64, was a son of the original Epes, and, like his half brother, Governor Winthrop, a soldier of distinction, wounded at Bunker Hill, commanding a regiment at the siege of Boston, and engaged in most of the important battles of the Revolution. He later moved to Maine, where he was chief justice of the Court of Common Pleas and an overseer of Bowdoin.

When all the books by Gloucester Sargents have been collected, or as many as can be obtained, they will make a most interesting collection.

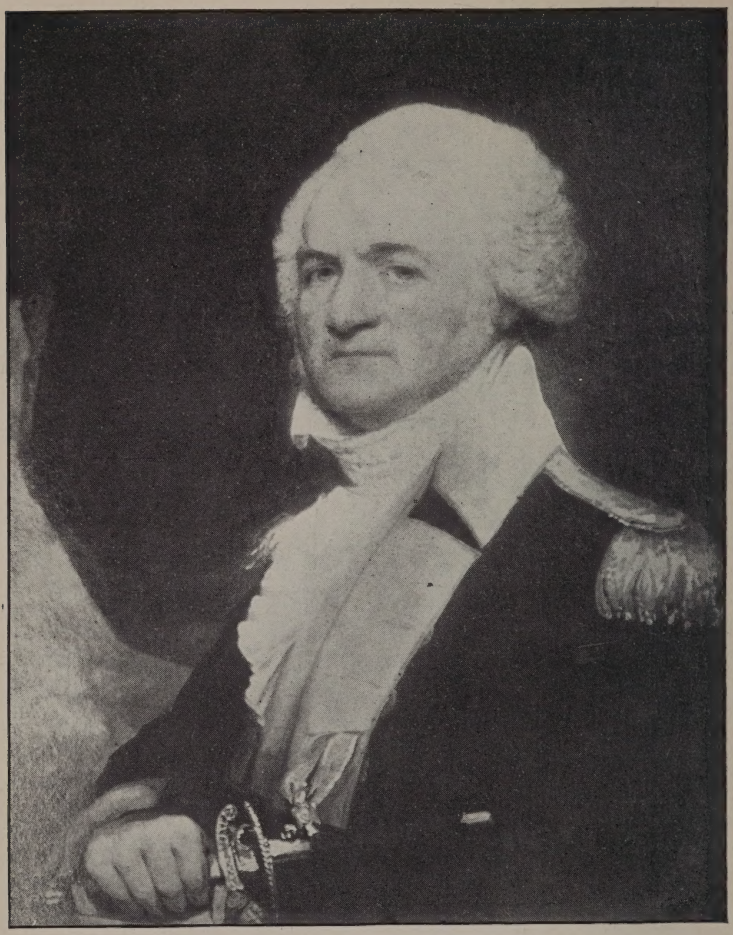
Winthrop Sargent, a grandson of the governor, made notable contributions as a historian, especially in his collection of the Loyalist Poetry of the Revolution and in his Life of Major John Andre.

Lucius Manlius Sargent, whose features may be seen in Numbers 59, 60 and 61 was a poet, translator, and reformer, whose "Temperance Tales" went through 130 editions and whose volumes "Dealings with the Dead" are among the most interesting and delightful reading to be found among books so original they are hard to classify.

Epes Sargent did much for the cause of education by his Standard Readers. He wrote several fine poems inspired by his Gloucester associations, the most famous being "Life on the Ocean Wave."

The collection of the Sargent books is far from complete. Any interested in those so far secured may consult the card catalogue, where many interesting items are recorded.

This by no means includes all the members of the family who attained far more than ordinary distinction, but, as this is neither a section of a



(FROM A PORTRAIT BY GILBERT STUART)

GOVERNOR WINTHROP SARGENT

Brother of Mrs. Murray. First Governor of the Mississippi Territory

Biographical Dictionary nor a history of the family, but an introduction to the Sargent Rooms, it must suffice.

Two other objects of interest may be seen in the Sargent Rooms. One is the portrait of James Swan, Number 48, whose daughter Christiana married John Turner Sargent. James Swan, a man of large means, was unjustly arrested for debt in Paris, as Horace Greeley was later. Rather than submit to blackmail he spent thirty years in a Paris prison. He was interested in a plan to save Marie Antoinette by getting her to America. Some of the tapestries in his house in Dorchester, now a part of Boston, it is said, were once the property of this unfortunate queen.

The other object of interest to which special attention is called is the photograph of the grave of Judith Sargent (Mrs. Murray), Number 71, near Natchez, Miss. John Murray's ashes, it is well known, after resting for some time in the Sargent tomb in the Granary Burial Ground, Boston, were finally removed to Mt. Auburn, where they now remain.

In the Murray Room are included such objects as we have been able to secure of special interest to Universalists. Here is an engraving of the first church, already described, an oil portrait of John Murray on wood by Henry Sargent, cousin of Mrs. Murray, presented by Rev. and Mrs. Theodore A. Fischer of New Haven, Conn., a portrait of Murray on glass by Henry Bacon, the gift of Rev. Eugene M. Grant of Wilton, N. H., a lock of John Murray's hair, presented by Rev. Fred A. Dillingham of Portsmouth, N. H., who also presented an original and most interesting silhouette of Mrs. Murray. Here we find the sermon case or holder, beautifully embroidered but worn and moth-eaten, used by John Murray. Think of the veneration in which John Murray was held, that this lock of his hair and this old sermon case have been preserved all these years!

In the Murray Room may also be seen an interesting steel engraving of Murray, a duplicate of which hangs in the old State House, Boston, and his book plate (framed), these presented by the writer of this sketch. Murray book plates are very scarce, the tradition being that most of his books went to Natchez, Miss., when his widow after her husband's death went there to live with her brother, Governor Winthrop Sargent, and that most of them were burned.

JOHN SINGER SARGENT
and
CHARLES SPRAGUE SARGENT

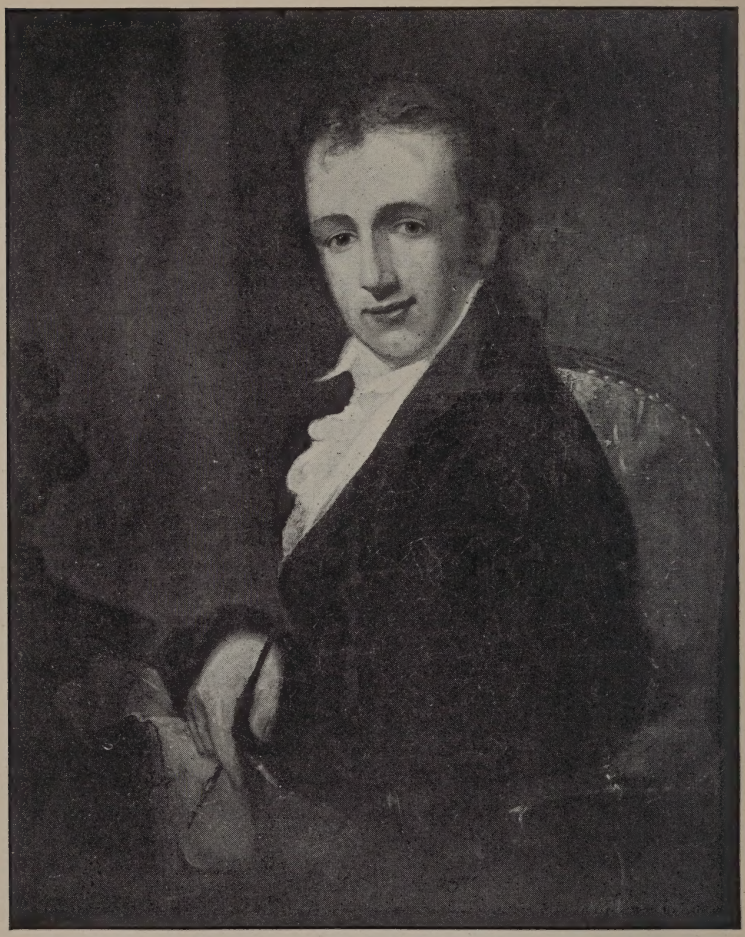
There are, however, in Natchez two objects of great interest that have survived and after long years have been located. As a matter of record and historical interest note is made of them here. One is the Murray family Bible, with genealogical matter of interest to the Sargents as well as all Universalists in the handwriting of Judith Sargent, her daughter, and her granddaughter, Miss Bingaman, who married a Livingston, dying shortly after without issue. The Bible is now the possession of David Lawrence McKettrick of Natchez, Miss., and it is greatly to be hoped that this may some day find a final resting place in the house so long associated with Mr. and Mrs. Murray, and which is now in part their memorial.

The writer of this sketch once found in a bookshop the family Bible of Rev. Aaron Cleveland, the common ancestor of Bishop A. Cleveland Coxe, Edmund Clarence Stedman and Grover Cleveland. It was his great privilege to see that it was placed without cost in the hands of those who prized it most. No real lover of books can fail to desire that rare books shall be where fitness would place them.

But while Murray's Bible cannot be seen by the pilgrims to the Sargent-Murray-Gilman House, it is no doubt safe and well cared for by Mr. McKettrick, who has permitted Mr. Winthrop Sargent of Philadelphia to have the biographical and pious reflections of Mrs. Murray copied, and these notes may be examined by the curious in the Sargent or Murray Rooms.

Besides this Bible there is also in another house in Natchez the journal of (Constantia) Mrs. Murray in fourteen volumes—the property of Mr. Louis Singer Gillette. At the time of this writing the owner is in Europe, otherwise we might hope that he would loan or perhaps present them to the house so intimately associated with the life of the author. There are also in the Murray Room two letters by John Murray, one presented by John Singer Sargent, and the other the gift of Rev. F. A. Bisbee, D. D.

In this room is also a photographic *fac simile* of the original Articles of Association, already described, and a portrait of John Somes as a prominent founder of the church, loaned by Miss Josephine Dolliver, also the Somes coat of arms, loaned by Miss Alice Knowles.



HENRY SARGENT

A cousin of Judith Sargent Murray

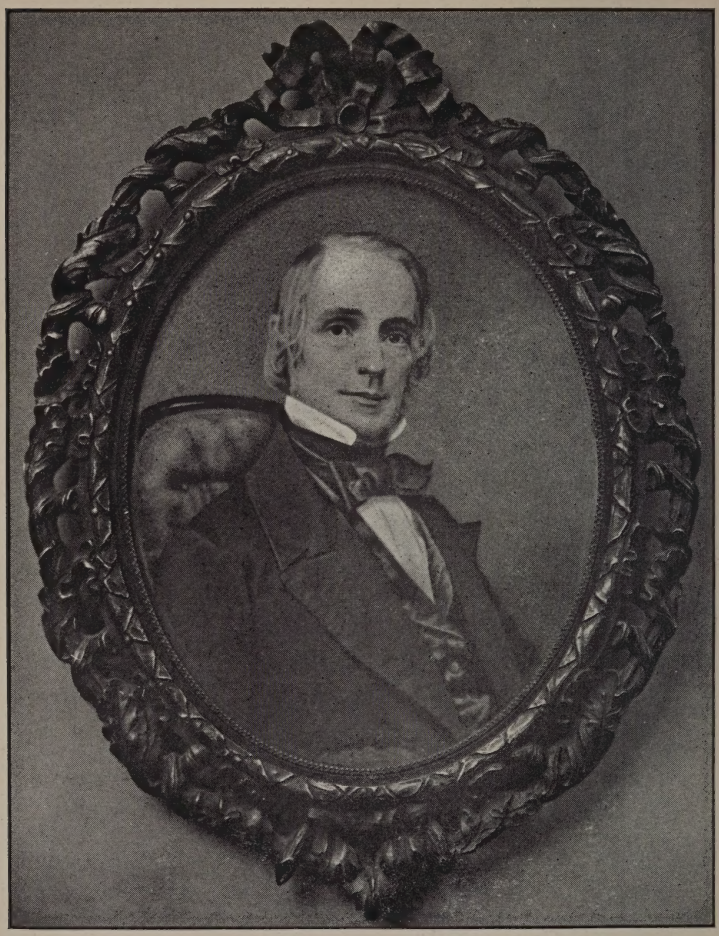
In the Murray Room hangs also a picture of Hon. Benjamin K. Hough, who occupied the house for fifty years and was for forty years treasurer of the Independent Christian Church, a man of the highest character and benevolence. He was a generous host and here entertained all Universalist ministers visiting Gloucester. His granddaughters, the Misses Hough of 29 Cedar St., Roxbury, have presented the house a number of most interesting objects that were in the house in their grandfather's time. There might well be a Hough Room, a memorial to this grand old character and his equally admirable father-in-law, William Pearce, one of the founders of the church, who rather than submit to injustice went to jail for conscience's sake. The Murray Room will be glad to receive further contributions, such as portraits, books, letters, furniture, or garments in any way associated with Mr. and Mrs. Murray, also books and pamphlets by and photographs of all ministers of the Independent Christian Church or sermons and addresses delivered in the church.

Of the three historic families memorialized in the house, the room assigned to Rev. Samuel Gilman is least developed. This room should and no doubt in time will equal any in interest.

A little before or just after the Murrays moved to Boston, this house was bought by Frederick Gilman, who came here from Exeter, New Hampshire. Of the Gilman ownership, Gen. William A. Pew of Salem writes:

"Frederick Gilman had a romance with Abigail Somes, whose father kept a tavern about where Stacy's clothing store now is. They were married, and he did business about where the Cape Ann Savings Bank is now located. He made a fortune, which, however, was dissipated before his death. He was a major of the Gloucester Militia, and was a great friend of General and Molly Stark. The Starks frequently came from Dunbarton and were entertained in the Middle Street house. After Gilman's death, the widow removed to Salem and carried on business in which she made a fortune. She had one boy and a girl. The boy was Rev. Samuel Gilman, for many years pastor of the Unitarian Church, Charleston, S. C., and author of 'Fair Harvard.'"

There is an interesting account of Rev. Samuel Gilman by Henry



SAMUEL GILMAN

Author of "Fair Harvard"

Wilder Foote, in the June 8, 1916, number of *Harvard Graduates Magazine*, and a memorial to his services in Charleston was dedicated in that city, April 16, 1916. Besides the song so familiar to all Harvard men, Rev. Samuel Gilman was a prolific writer for the periodicals, and the author of a number of books, while his wife, Caroline Gilman, was also a writer of distinction.

The contents of the Gilman Room are a large oil portrait of Rev. Samuel Gilman, artist unknown, presented by Prof. Henry Wilder Foote, a photograph of a painting of Gilman when a young man, ownership and artist not known, a broadside of Gilman framed, photographs of Mr. and Mrs. Gilman in later years, engravings of the Gilman Homestead, Exeter, New Hampshire, the summer home near Charleston, S. C., photograph of his grave, and part of his walking stick, all presented by his granddaughter, Mrs. Rebecca Gilman Rae of Washington, who has the desk on which "Fair Harvard" was written, and many other interesting objects associated with her illustrious grandfather. Books by either Rev. Samuel Gilman or his wife, Caroline, or manuscripts, or other portraits, or engravings of either, or objects in any way associated with the Gilmans, would be most acceptable to the trustees of the house.

A room is also being furnished in memory of Miss Georgiana Parsons, an honored teacher in the public and private schools of Gloucester, for thirty years clerk of the Independent Christian Church and for a number of years church organist. The furnishing of this room is largely the work of Mr. George O. Stacy, one of the trustees of the house and a pupil of Miss Parsons, and her niece, Miss Maria Parsons, of Winchester, Mass., who has contributed numerous objects of interest, formerly in her aunt's home, the most interesting being the office desk of Robert Rantoul, the friend of Whittier, and the able advocate of every good cause during the years he lived in Gloucester.

Had the house no historic interest, it would still appeal to all who love what is best in our old New England homes. It is one of the best examples of pure Georgian architecture to be found in New England. Especially worthy of note are the stairway and the hand-carved balusters, or banis-

ters, as James Russell Lowell called them, and the newel post, its several rooms with finely paneled walls, its superbly carved mantel in the Sargent Room, its powder closets on the second floor, its sliding shutters, best seen in the Georgiana Parsons Room, but found also in several other rooms, and the quaint little fire-place on the third floor.

A brief history of the house in recent years is necessary to a proper understanding of its future prospects.

In 1915 it was in danger of being destroyed and its beautiful woodwork taken to the Metropolitan Museum, New York. An option on it was taken, believing that because it ought to be preserved the way to do it could be found. An appeal was first made to the Universalists, who responded with over five thousand dollars, and the title passed to the Universalist General Convention, subject to a mortgage which had been on it for over thirty years, and which it still carries, of over four thousand dollars. It was soon found that a religious body could hold historic property only at an inconvenience and cost that would make plans for the house impossible of realization. It was felt, too, that the property should be held by an organization on which all interests could be represented, so the Sargent-Murray-Gilman House Association, provided for under a special Massachusetts law for holding historic property, was organized. On the Board of Trustees all interests are represented.

In order to do business the majority of the trustees are citizens of Gloucester, and that there might be those always vitally interested in its proper use and up-keep, it was felt by all who had contributed to its preservation that the members of the Independent Christian Church should always be well represented on this board, since the history of the house and the church are so closely related. From the very first Mr. Winthrop Sargent, a descendant of the original Winthrop, and a public-spirited citizen of Philadelphia and Haverford, Pa., has been most generous, not only with money but also with thought and time. It is not too much to say that without his help the progress now realized could not have been made.

He saw from the first that it was not enough to preserve the house, but that it must be restored to its original setting. The same is true of

Miss Georgiana Wells Sargent of New York and Lenox, who has helped generously. Some two thousand dollars has been given by Harvard graduates, and this together with help from all other sources enabled the association to spend $3,500 in 1919, in improvements, and buy three blocks on Main Street for $17,000, of which amount $7,000 has been paid. The Association now owns a property worth $30,000, half of which remains on mortgage, but with an income well above all carrying charges. In time this would provide a sinking fund that would clear it of debt.

But no one interested wishes to wait, or expects to wait, twenty or twenty-five years to have the possibilities of the house realized.

The income bearing property was bought that it might be removed—that an old-fashioned garden terraced from the house down to Main Street may give this fine old house the setting it once had and still deserves.

To complete the work, therefore, $15,000 is needed to pay off the debts and a considerable sum for the laying out of the garden and its up-keep. There ought also to be an adequate endowment fund.

Much has been done during the last three years, but more remains to be done.

This booklet is only a report of progress and a plea for help to complete the work now in progress.

There are three ways by which those interested can help.

First, by gifts.

Second, by joining the Sargent-Murray-Gilman House Association. Membership fees are: Associate $1.00 per year; Active, $2.00 per year; Life Membership, $50.

You can also remember the Association by a bequest in your will. What better can one do with a few hundred or a few thousand dollars than to help in the preservation of this, one of the most interesting historic buildings in New England?

The legal title of the church is The Independent Christian Church, and of the house, The Sargent-Murray-Gilman House Association.

Following are the names of the members of the Board of Trustees of the Sargent-Murray-Gilman House:

Winthrop Sargent, Haverford, Pa.; Charles S. Sargent, Brookline, Mass.; Clarence R. Skinner, Somerville, Mass.; Frank C. Spinney, Lynn, Mass.; Edward Dolliver, George O. Stacy, Jeremiah Foster, Frank C. Pearce, J. Hollis Griffin, Clifford G. Corliss, and Frank H. Gaffney, Jr., Gloucester.

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